Story Thus Far:

Prince Kail
A Hittite royal prince, general, and priest-sorcerer.

Yuri
A Japanese schoolgirl magically transported to the ancient Hittite Empire.

Queen Nakia
Kail's stepmother, an evil sorceress determined to see her own son on the Hittite throne.

Yuri, a typical junior high student, is sucked into a puddle and emerges in the ancient Hittite Empire! Evil Queen Nakia has drawn Yuri across time and space to be a sacrifice to her god, Teshub. Rescued by the handsome but arrogant Prince Kail, Yuri learns that returning home requires three things: the aid of a sorcerer equal to the queen—which Prince Kail happens to be; Hattusa's seven springs must all fill with water; and she must wear the clothes in which she arrived.

A Hittite force led by Yuri has been dispatched to liberate the castle city of Beykal from a force from Arzawa. Hearing that the occupying army's commander is a womanizer, Yuri devises a ruse that allows her to retake the city without bloodshed. Arzawa's queen is impressed by Yuri's cleverness and compassion during the takeover, and decides to form an alliance with the Hittite empire.

Back in Hattusa, Nakia decides to build a temple over the spring where Yuri first appeared. Her intention is to bury the spring so Yuri will be unable to return to Japan. Nakia still wants to use Yuri as a human sacrifice in order to elevate her son to the throne, but Yuri learns of the plan and tries to ride back to Hattusa before it's too late. Kail, now arrived on the battlefield in Ugarit, also hears of this plot and dispatches half of his troops back to Hattusa to stop it. Nakia anticipates Kail's actions and sends a message to Egypt recommending a full-scale attack against the reduced Hittite force. However, Egypt's offensive is thrown back by Kail's tactical acumen, and the Hittites appear to be on the verge of an unprecedented victory—until Kail is hit by an arrow loosed by Ramses during an Egyptian ambush!

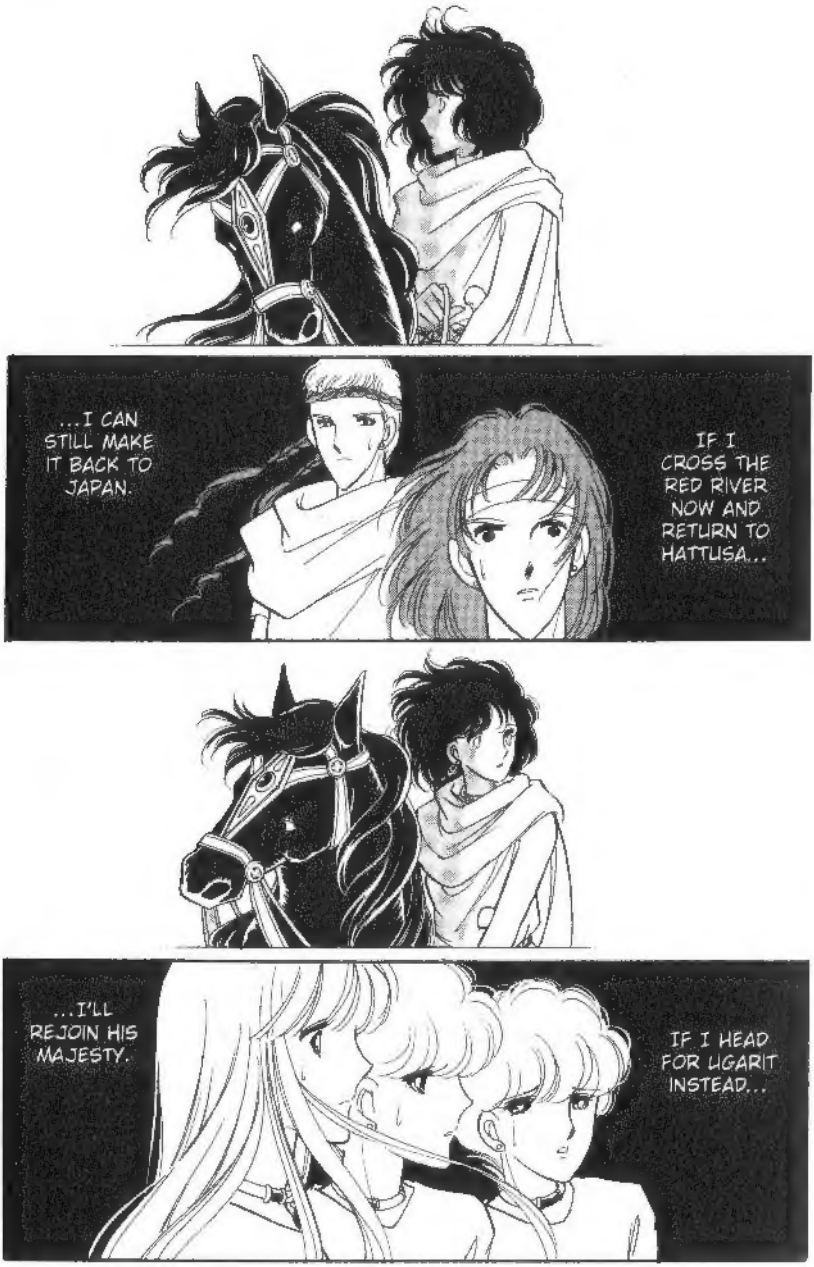
THE HEAD-BAND HIS MAJESTY GAVE HER JUST... SNAPPED APART!
WHAT A SINISTER OMEN!
HERE IT IS, PRINCESS YURI.
SPLASH

...SOMETHING BAD HAS HAPPENED TO HIS MAJESTY.
I HOPE IT DOESN'T MEAN...
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
I HAVE AN URGENT MESSAGE FOR YOU.
I'M RELIEVED TO FIND YOU, ISHTAR!
A MESSENGER!
I WONDER IF HE'S FROM HATTUSA.

IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE QUEEN DOWAGER FROM...
...DESTROYING THE SPRING, HALF HIS MAJESTY'S TROOPS HAVE BEEN...
...SENT BACK TO HATTUSA FROM UGARIT!
WHAT'S THAT? HALF HIS MAJESTY'S TROOPS?!
YOU MEAN HIS MAJESTY IS FIGHTING THE EGYPTIANS...
...WITH ONLY HALF HIS MEN?
EVEN A GREAT WARRIOR LIKE HIS MAJESTY CAN'T CONFRONT THE EGYPTIANS WITH SUCH A SMALL FORCE!
THAT'S ABSURD!

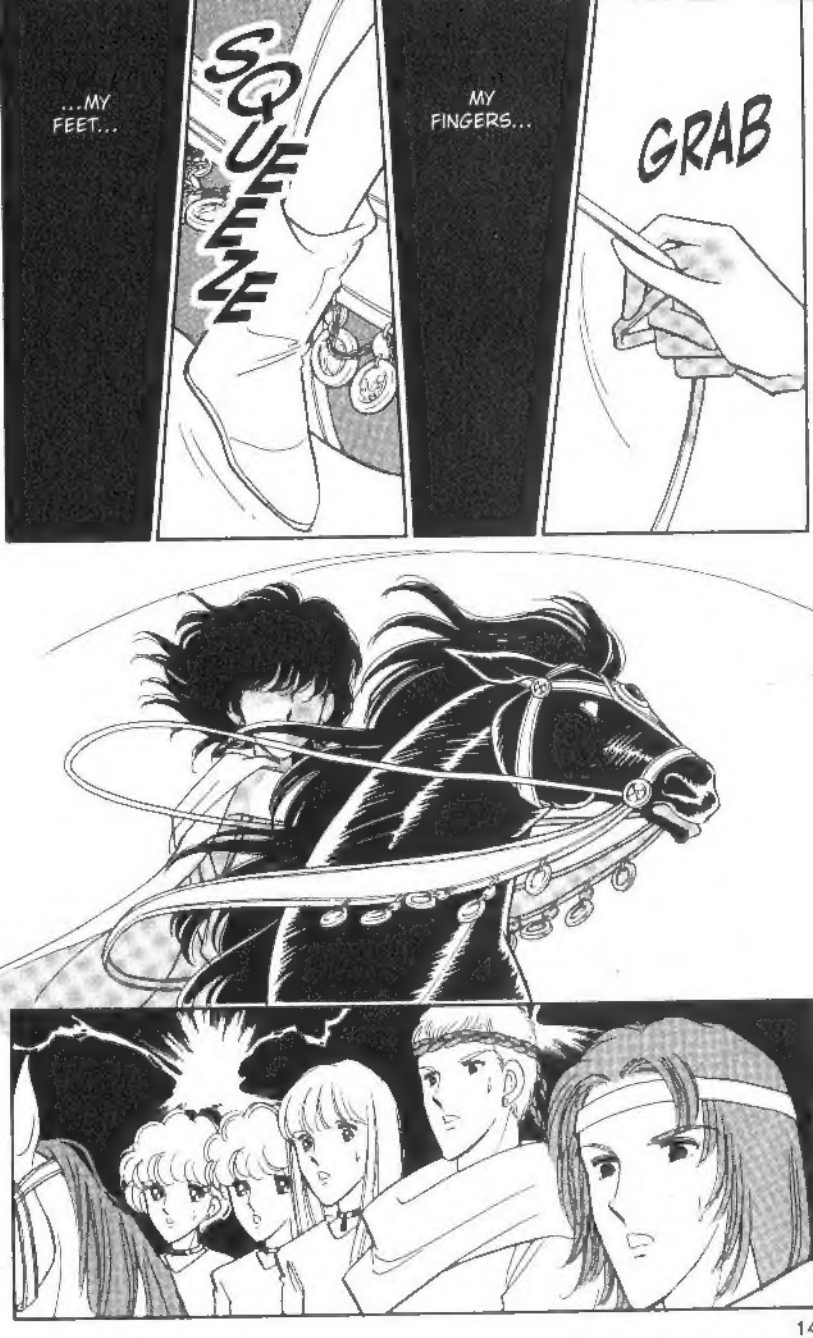
PLEASE ISHTAR, MAKE HASTE TO RETURN TO HATTUSA!
THE QUEEN DOWAGER HAS IGNORED HIS MAJESTY'S DECREE...
...AND PROCEEDS WITH CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE!
OH, PRINCESS YURI...
TIME IS RUNNING OUT!
HIS MAJESTY'S SOLDIERS ARE DOING WHAT THEY CAN TO IMPEDE THE PROJECT, BUT...
...IT WON'T BE ENOUGH!

YURI...
BIG SIS...
WE'RE WAITING FOR YOU! COME HOME!
ISHTAR, I URGE YOU...GO!
BUT HIS MAJES-TY...
NO, SHALA.
WHAT?
PRINCESS YURI MUST MAKE UP HER OWN MIND.

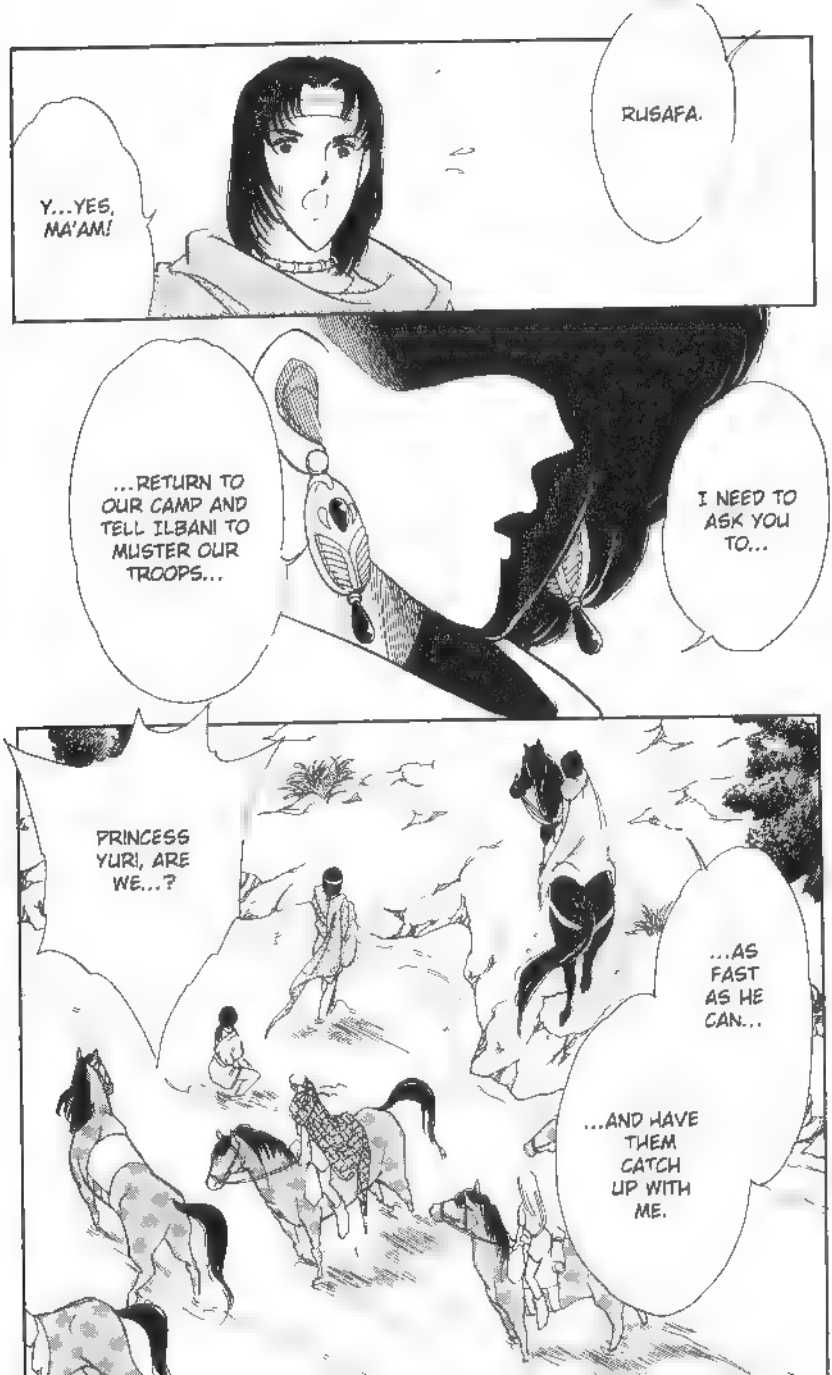

...I CAN STILL MAKE IT BACK TO JAPAN.
IF I CROSS THE RED RIVER NOW AND RETURN TO HATTUSA...
...I'LL REJOIN HIS MAJESTY.
IF I HEAD FOR UGARIT INSTEAD...

...TO THINK LOGICALLY, BUT...

I WAS TOO UPSET...


...MY FEET...
SQUEEZE
MY FINGERS...
GRAB

...MY BODY AND MY MIND KNEW...
...WHERE I REALLY WANTED TO GO!
SPLASH


RUSAFA.
Y...YES, MA'AM!
I NEED TO ASK YOU TO...
...RETURN TO OUR CAMP AND TELL ILBANI TO MUSTER OUR TROOPS...
PRINCESS YURI, ARE WE...?
...AS FAST AS HE CAN...
...AND HAVE THEM CATCH UP WITH ME.

HEADING FOR UGARIT? YES!
HIS MAJESTY NEEDS TROOPS! WE WILL BRING THEM!

...I WON'T BE RETURNING TO HATTUSA FOR SOME TIME. I'M SURE SHE'LL BE HAPPY TO HEAR IT.
YES, ISHTAR!
MESSENGER! RETURN AND...
...INFORM THE QUEEN DOWAGER THAT...
FWIP
I WILL COLLECT YOUR TROOPS.
...IMMEDIATELY, PRINCESS YUR!
WHINNY
THERE'S STILL A LONG RIDE AHEAD.
I'M SORRY, ASLAN
ALL RIGHT! LET'S GO!
YEAH!

THE WIND IS STIRRING..
WHIN
NY
..A DRY WIND THAT SWIRLS THE SAND INTO THE SKY.

I DON'T WANT TO ABANDON MY FAMILY...
...BUT I CAN'T GIVE UP MY LOVE FOR HIM!
HOW MUCH LONGER BEFORE ISHTAR RETURNS?

SHE'LL BE DESTROYING THE SPRING ANY MINUTE!
WE CAN'T STAND IN THE QUEEN DOWAGER'S WAY ANY LONGER!
HMPH! THE NEW KING'S DECREE MEANS NOTHING TO ME.
I AM THE LEGITIMATE WIFE OF HIS PREDECESSOR!
IN ADDITION, I AM TAWANNANA OF THIS COUNTRY.
BURY THE SPRING...
...NOW! I COMMAND IT!

NOW I KNOW I WAS MEANT TO LIVE HERE.
CRASH
LITTLE GIRL...
...YOU'RE TRAPPED NOW! FOR GOOD!
CRASH
CRASH

...AND BE BURIED IN THIS NATION'S RED SOIL
I AM DETERMINED TO LIVE IN THIS COUNTRY..

FROM NOW ON, THIS IS WHERE I BELONG!
THIS LAND THAT LIES BESIDE THE RED RIVER HAS BECOME MY HOME.

UGARIT
MURSILI II HAS BEEN INJURED!
AFTER THEM!
WE MUSTN'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY!
DRIVE THE HITTITES OUT INTO THE OPEN!
MURSILI MUST STILL BE IN COMMAND!
CURSE IT! IT'S BEEN THREE DAYS SINCE I SHOT H.M, BUT THE HITTITE TROOPS REMAIN ORGANIZED.

YOUR MAJESTY, I BEG YOU TO REST FOR A WHILE.
YOU ARE BADLY INJURED AND...
STOP MAKING SUCH A FUSS, KIKKURI.
IF MY SOLDIERS LEARN ABOUT MY INJURY, THEIR MORALE WILL BE DAMAGED.

I UNDER-STAND, SIR...
...BUT DON'T FORGET THAT YOU ALMOST D ED.
AFTER ALL, TH S SMALL...
...PIECE OF CLAY SAVED MY LIFE.
CLINK
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I GUESS LUCK S STILL WITH ME.

HIS MAJESTY KEPT IT WITH HIM ALL THIS TIME.
THAT'S THE LETTER PRINCESS YURI SENT YOU.
HER FIRST LETTER.. AND HER LAST.
"FAREWELL. I LOVE YOU."

WHICH WORDS DID RAMSES'S ARROW STRIKE, "FAREWE..L" OR "I LOVE YOU"?
I STILL FIND IT HARD TO EVEN IMAGINE
YOUR MAJESTY!

ENOUGH, KIKKURI
WHEN THE EGYPTIANS RESUME THEIR ATTACK IN THE MORNING, YOU'LL HAVE NO CHANCE TO REST...
IT'S TRUE PRINCESS YURI'S LETTER SAVED YOUR LIFE, BUT THE ARROW STILL PIERCED YOU!
YOUR MAJESTY, PLEASE CONSIDER YOUR CONDITION.
THERE'S MUCH I NEED TO THINK ABOUT.
WE ARE SO CLEARLY OUTNUMBERED FACING THEM HEAD-ON IS NOT AN OPTION.
I NEED TO COME UP WITH A PLAN.
KIKKURI IS RIGHT.
THE EGYPTIANS WILL COME AT US HARD TOMORROW.
HOW CAN I ASSURE A SAFE WITHDRAWAL OF MY TROOPS?

AND ANOTHER DAY OF RUNNING FROM THE EGYPTIANS WILL BEGIN!
THE SUN IS RISING
THE MORNING STAR WILL BE UP SOON.
HEY! LOOK OVER THERE!
WHERE ?
THE TOP OF THAT HILL!
THIS IS BAD!
AT THIS POINT, THE EGYPTIANS WILL CATCH US ON THE PLAIN.
THAT WOULD MEAN OUR SLAUGHTER FOR SURE!

ISN'T THAT OUR FLAG?!
...THEY'RE MARCHING UNDER THE RED LION!
WHOEVER IT IS...
I. . IT IS!
BUT WE HAVE NO FORCES OVER THERE!

...FARE-
WELL"
OR "I
LOVE
YOU"?

WHICH
WORDS
DID
RAMSES'S
ARROW
DESTROY...

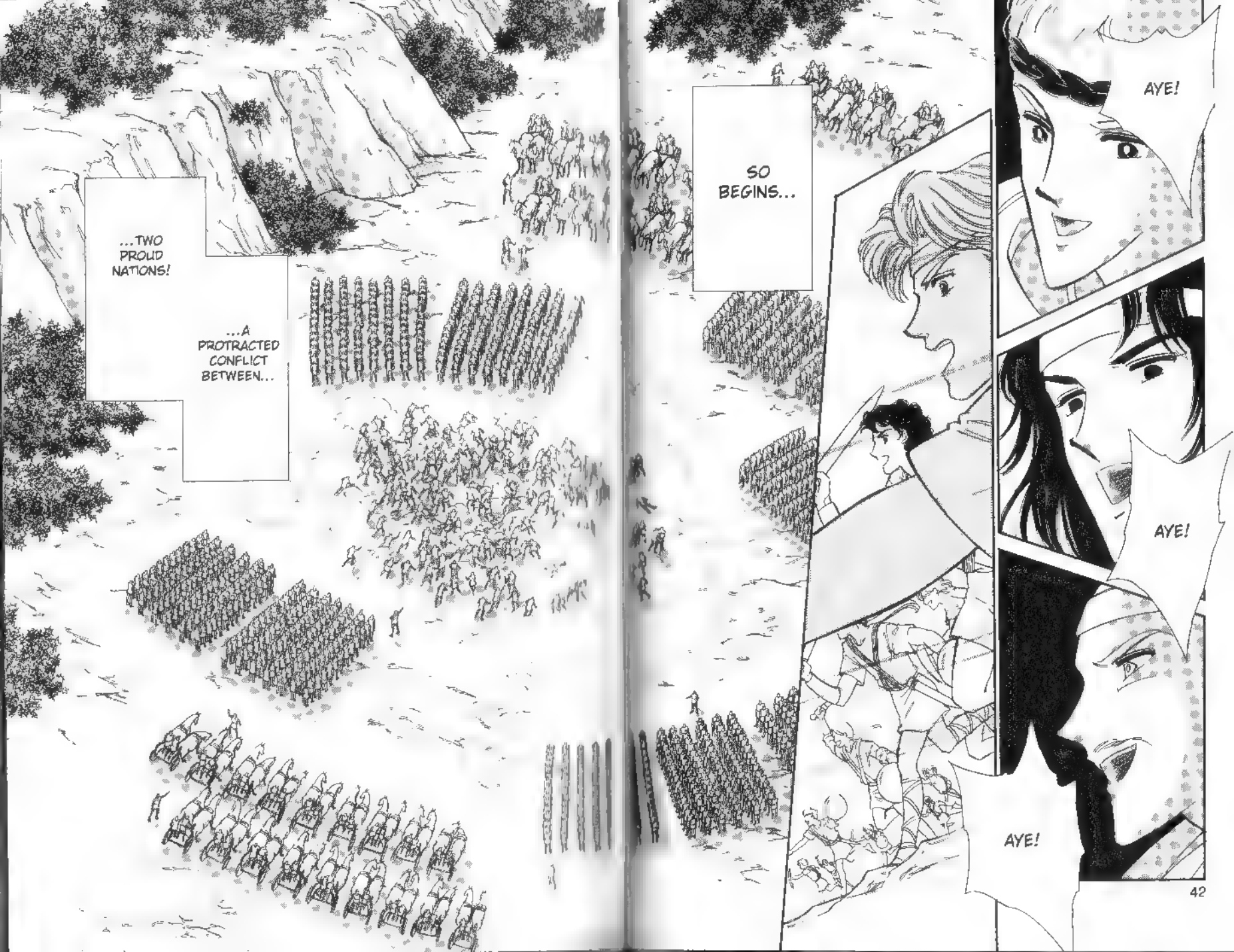
YURI ?!
BY HEAVEN! IT'S ISHTAR!

ROAR
ISHTAR!
ISHTAR HAS BROUGHT REINFORCE-MENTS!
RAAAAH
ISHTAR!

YURI?!
WHY IS SHE HERE?!
YUR!
LOOK! ANOTHER HITTITE FORCE!

THIS IS...
...UN-EXPECTED.
DAY-LIGHT'S COME!
MUSTER MY TROOPS!
PREPARE FOR BATTLE!
FOOL! IT'S TOO LATE.
WE MUST STRIKE NOW!

NOW THAT MURSILI II HAS SUFFICIENT TROOPS...
...YOU ARE NO MATCH FOR H.M. HOMREHEB.
GET READY!
POSITION YOUR UNITS FOR BATTLE!
KASH! RI.SAFA! MITTANNAMWA!
THE REST OF MY FORCES ARE TO JOIN HIS MAJESTY!


...TWO PROUD NATIONS!
...A PROTRACTED CONFLICT BETWEEN...
SO BEGINS...
AYE!
AYE!
AYE!

HMPH!
I'M NOT DES-TINED...
...TO CONFRONT THAT MAN YET, IT SEEMS.
ALL RIGHT.
I'M NOT GOING TO RISK MY LIFE IN THIS BATTLE.
LISTEN MEN, WE'LL DESTROY A FEW HITTITE CHARIOTS AND THEN RETREAT.
GENERAL RAMSES ?!
THERE'S NO TIME TO DEBATE THE MATTER. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LIVE THROUGH THIS DAY, DO AS I SAY.

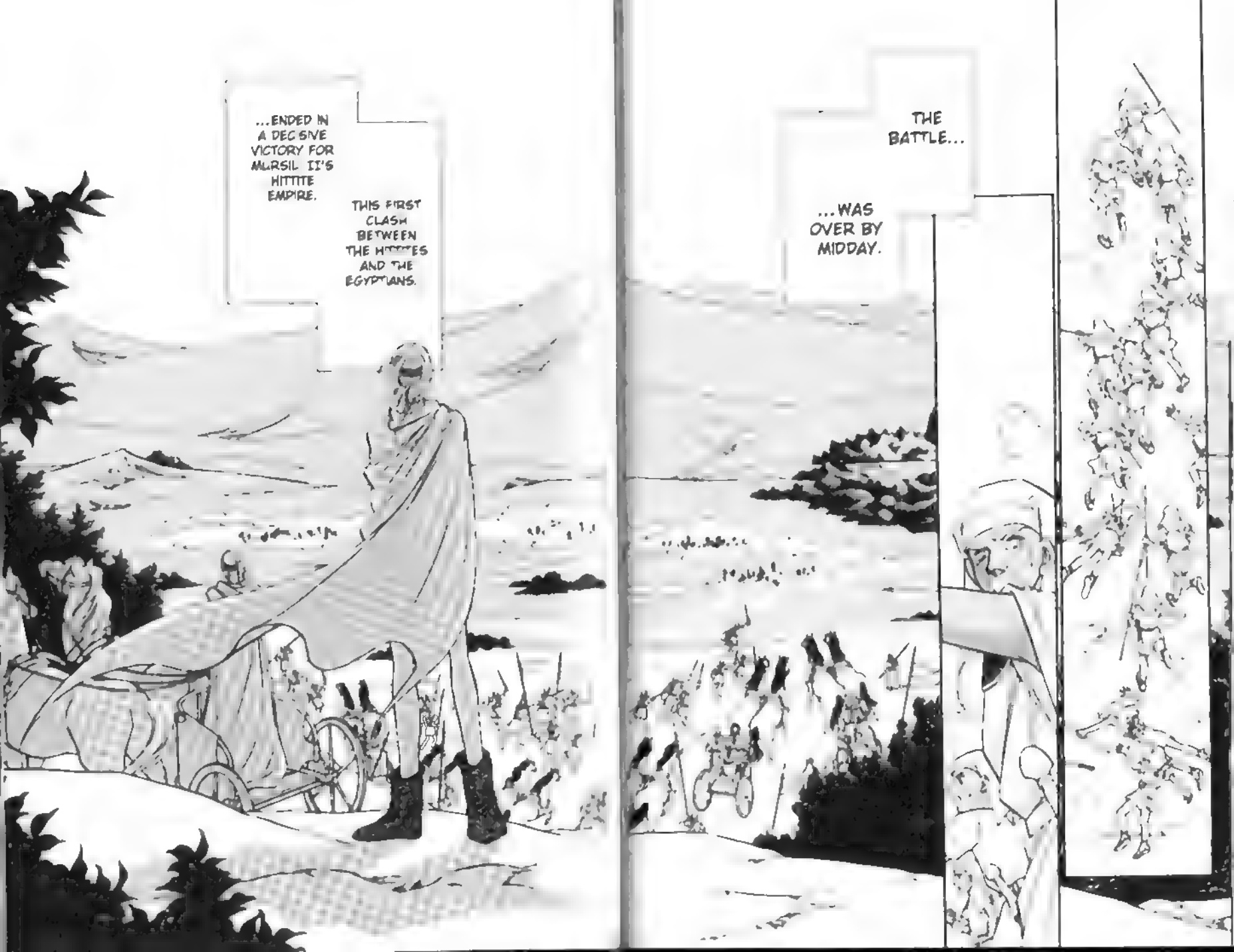
CLOP
OH... ISHTAR!
WHERE IS HIS MAJESTY?
TELL ME, S HE BADLY INJURED?
LET'S GO!

WE'VE HEARD NO REPORTS OF THAT, ISHTAR.
EH?
IS HIS MAJESTY INJURED?
I'M JUST GLAD PRINCESS YURI DECIDED TO STAY
YOU TOOK THE HEAD-BAND TOO SERIOUSLY.
YOU SEE, PRINCESS YURI?
I KNOW SOME-THING'S HAPPENED TO HIS MAJESTY.
I'M SURE OF IT!
NO, I DIDN'T.

I HAVE A REPORT, YOUR MAJESTY!
OUR UNIT HAS DEFEATED AN EGYPTIAN BRIGADE!
FINISH THIS BATTLE QUICKLY AND...
...FIND HIS MAJESTY FOR ME!
UNIT COMMANDERS KASH, RUSAFA AND MITTANNAMWA HAVE JOINED US!
Y...YES, MA'AM!
VERY WELL
ALLOW THOSE UNITS TO OPERATE IN WHATEVER WAY THEIR COMMANDERS THINK BEST.
JUST TELL THEM NOT TO OVEREXTEND THEIR LINES.

OUR VICTORY IS ASSURED!
AND I'M SO PLEASED TO SEE PRINCESS YUR, AGAIN...
..
WHY DID YOU COME HERE INSTEAD, YUR?

KOOAH
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THOSE MEN?!
THIS BATTLE SHOULD BE OVER! I'LL GO FINISH IT MYSELF!
WHY DIDN'T YOU GO HOME?!
YOUR MAJESTY!


...ENDED IN A DECISIVE VICTORY FOR MURSIL II'S HITTITE EMPIRE.
THIS FIRST CLASH BETWEEN THE HITTITES AND THE EGYPTIANS.
THE BATTLE...
...WAS OVER BY MIDDAY.

HIS MAJESTY ...
...WHERE IS HIS MAJESTY?
PRINCESS YURI! THE EGYPTIANS ARE WITH-DRAWING!
WE'VE WON!
...WITH HIS AIDES, MA'AM.
HIS MAJESTY S ON THE FRONT LINES...
I TOLD HIM I WANTED TO RETURN TO JAPAN
I MADE UP MY MIND TO PART FROM HIM TO GO HOME.
CLOP

IF HIS MAJESTY CAN FORGIVE ME FOR CHANGING MY MIND, I WANT TO BECOME A HITTITE
YET...
...EVEN IF HE WON'T FORGIVE ME, I'LL BE HAPPY AS LONG AS I CAN SHARE...
...THE SAME SKY WITH HIM!!

GLOOM

PRINCESS YURI!
FWAP
I KNEW YOU'D BEEN WOUNDED!
I KNEW IT!

CLUTCH
WHY...
...DIDN'T YOU RETURN HOME?
I TOLD YOU TO RETURN TO HATTUSA AS SOON AS YOU'D FINISHED WITH ARZAWA!
WHY DID YOU COME HERE?
NAKIA MUST'VE DESTROYED THE SPRING BY NOW!

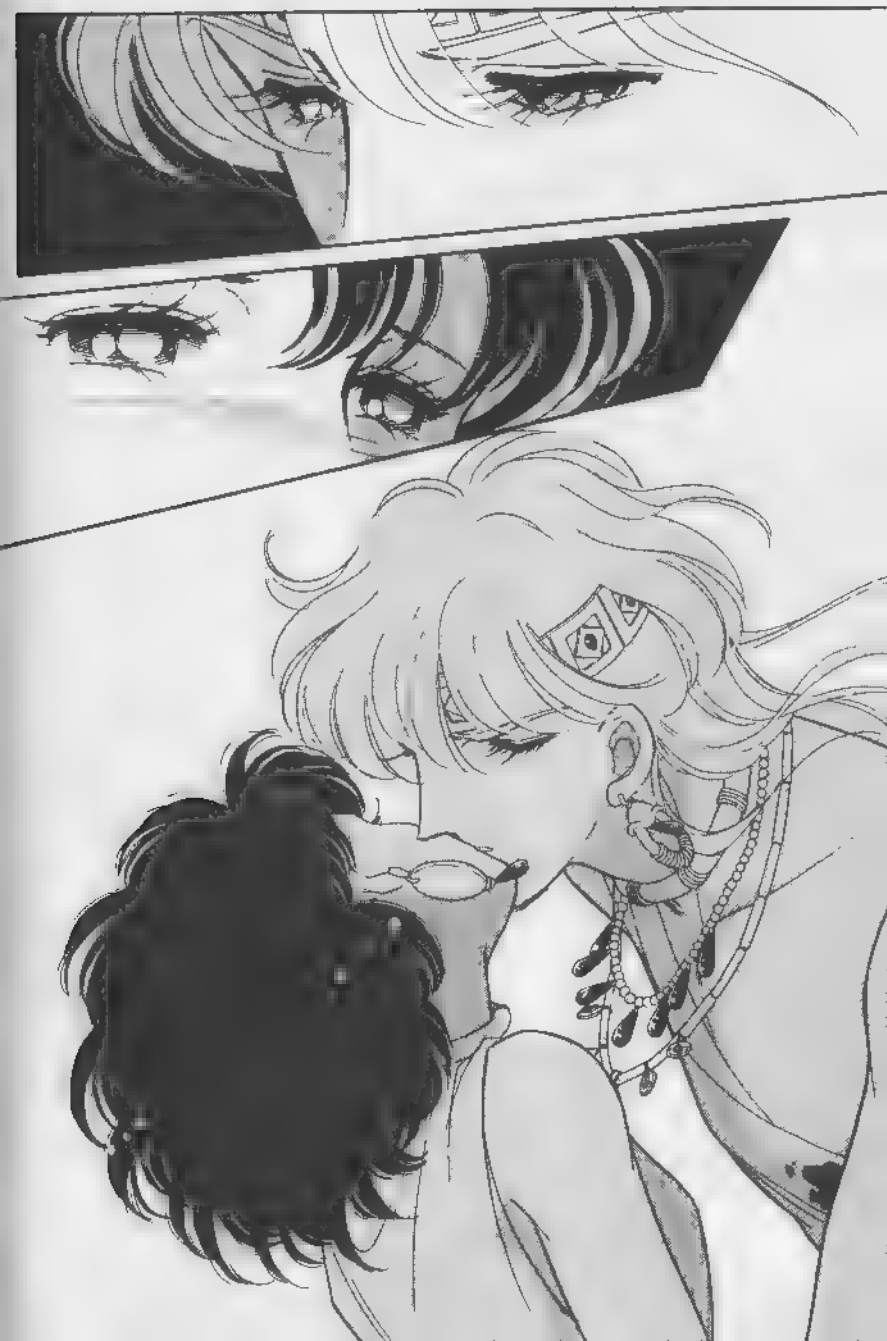
DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS...
...FOR YOU TO REMAIN IN THIS COUNTRY?
I KNOW.
NOW YOU'RE HERE... FOR GOOD!

I DO, YOUR MAJESTY.
IT MEANS I WILL NO LONGER TURN MY BACK ON MILITARY AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS.
I STILL DISLIKE THEM, BUT I WILL TRY MY BEST TO EDUCATE MYSELF IN THESE THINGS!
I WON'T ACT LIKE A BABY ANYMORE.
I'M GROWN UP NOW AND...
WHAT IT MEANS IS...

BRUSH
...YOU ARE MINE.
YOU'LL LIVE WITH ME FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.
IF YOU REMAIN HERE, YOU WILL ACCEPT...
...WHAT IS BETWEEN US, WHAT NEITHER OF US CAN DENY.

DO YOU UNDER-STAND THIS?!

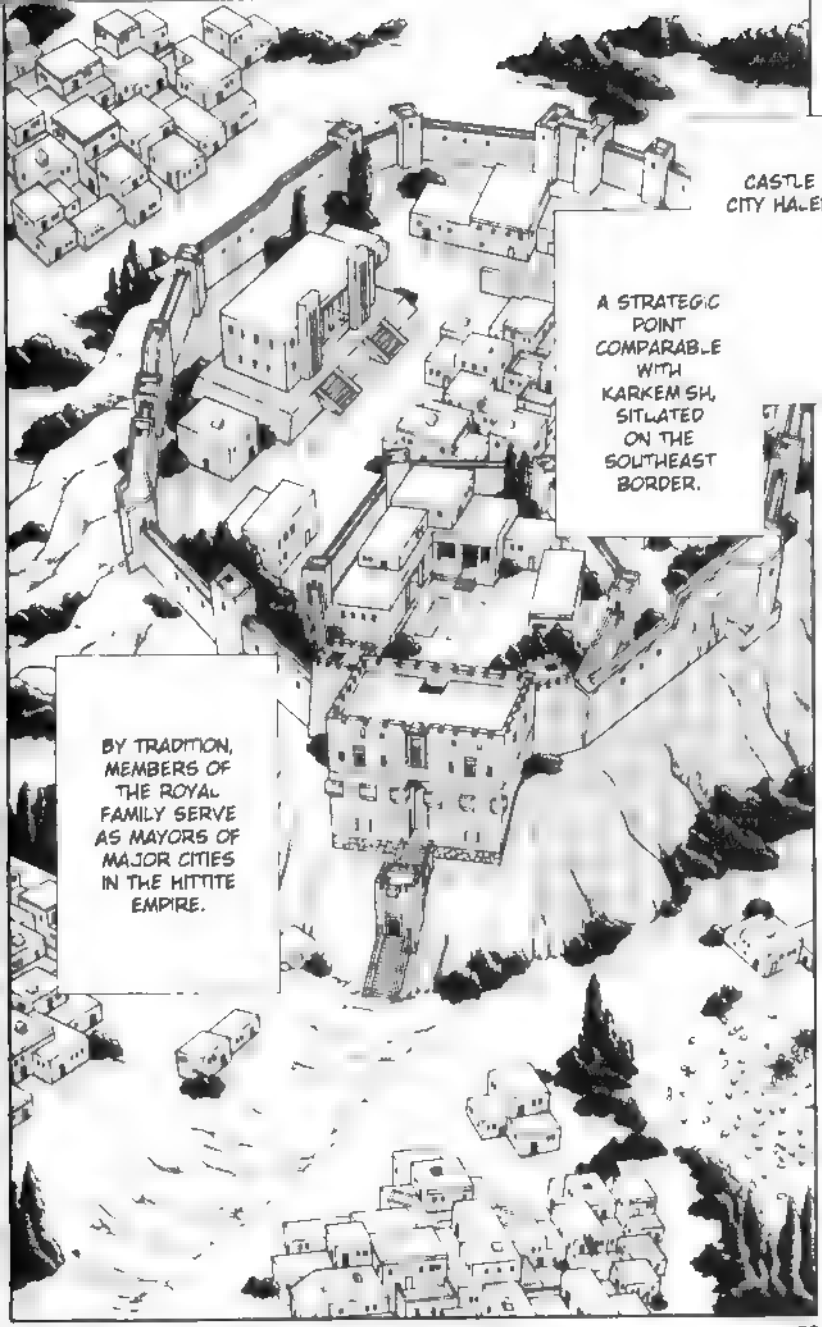
YES...
..I DO.
PERFECTLY



YOUR..
...MAJESTY!
DON'T KISS SO HARD. YOUR WOUND MIGHT ..
MMM..

YURI...
YURI...

YOUR
MAJESTY!


CASTLE CITY HALEB
A STRATEGIC POINT COMPARABLE WITH KARKEMISH, SITUATED ON THE SOUTHEAST BORDER.
BY TRADITION, MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY SERVE AS MAYORS OF MAJOR CITIES IN THE HITTITE EMPIRE.

STRATEGIC POINT A MILITARY, TRADE, AND TRANSPORT CENTER

IS SHE ALL RIGHT?
ZZZZZZZZZ
IN HALEB, THE MAYOR IS MURSIL II'S HALF BROTHER..
..PRINCE ROIS TEL PIRU.

NAB
AS HIS MAJESTY'S ONLY CONCUBINE, YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND!
PRINCE TELIPINU IS HOSTING A BANQUET TO CELEBRATE HIS MAJESTY'S VICTORY.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I'VE GOT A BAAAAD FEELING...
WE'VE GOT HER!
I KNEW IT!
HERE!
WE'RE GOING TO SCRUB YOU DOWN FROM HEAD TO TOE.

SHE ATE ENOUGH FOR THREE HORSES BEFORE SHE FELL ASLEEP.
SHE'S JUST FINE.
ZZZZZ
SNORE
ZZZZZZ
SNORE
SHE'S CONKED OUT A LOT SINCE WE ARRIVED IN HALEB.
OH, HI GUYS.
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE HERE!
PRINCESS YURI!
WELL, SHE EXHAUSTED HERSELF GETTING ME HERE.
I WANT TO SLEEP BESIDE ASLAN TONIGHT. WILL YOU BRING ME A BLANKET?

I PROMISE I'LL SCRUB MYSELF FROM HEAD TO TOE.
WELL, YOU MUST HAVE OTHER STUFF TO DO...
...SO I'LL JUST BATHE MYSELF.
I CAN'T GET USED TO SOMEONE SCRUBBING ME!
I LIKE TO BATHE, BUT
ALL RIGHT. WE'LL PREPARE YOUR DRESS FOR THE BANQUET.
CAN WE TRUST YOU?
WILL YOU REALLY ?
SPLASH
THIS FEELS WONDER-FUL!
IT'S MY FIRST BATH SINCE WE LEFT ARZAWA.

...I GUESS I'M PAST THE POINT OF NO RETURN.
WELL...
SIGH
DAD... MOM..
I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR GIVING ME LIFE.
I'M SO SORRY I WON'T BE ABLE TO RETURN THE LOVE YOU'VE GIVEN ME FOR 15 YEARS.

OH, ALL RIGHT.
PRINCESS YURI, YOUR DRESS IS READY.
...ON YOUR CHEST AND THE NAPE OF YOUR NECK, OKAY?
I WILL PUT SOME BALM...
I'D PUT IT ALL OVER YOUR BODY IF I COULD
BE CAREFUL, RYU!.
IT WILL ALWAYS MAKE ME SAD THAT I WILL NEVER SEE MY FAMILY AGAIN.
YOU MUST TIE THE RIBBONS LOOSELY ...NO KNOTS.
BUT I WON'T REGRET MY CHOICE.

...HAVE TO DO WITH THE CEREMONY?
HEY!
WHAT DO LOOSELY TIED RIBBONS AND BALM...
YOU'VE DECIDED TO STAY SO IT'S ONLY NATURAL
TONIGHT IS THE NIGHT YOU'LL BECOME HIS MAJESTY'S TRUE CONCUBINE!
OH, PRINCESS YURI!
THROB
WAIT A MINUTE!
THAT'S WHY WE'RE MAKING YOU UP LIKE THIS AND...
HIS MAJESTY IS INJURED! WE SHOULD WAIT TILL HIS WOUNDS ARE HEALED!
SEE? EASILY UNTIED
FWIP
TRUE CONCU-BINE...?

PLUS, WE'RE STILL ON A MILITARY EXPEDITION!
OF COURSE!
OH, SHOULD WE?
WE SHOULD WAIT UNTIL WE RETURN TO HATTUSA!
SIIIGH
IS THAT SO?
OH.
THROB
TO BECOME HIS MAJESTY'S REAL CONCUBINE MEANS...
THROB
...THAT WE W LL BE...UH... MAK NG LOVE, RIGHT?
THROB
THROB

SPLASH
I WAS SO PREOCCUPIED WITH WHETHER I SHOULD REMAIN HERE OR RETURN TO JAPAN THAT...
I DIDN'T CONSIDER THIS PARTICULAR DEVELOPMENT

PRINCE ROIS TE-IPINU, MAYOR OF HALEB.
...YOUR MAJESTY.
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR VICTORY OVER EGYPT...

MURSILI II...
...THE HITTITE KING
THANK YOU, MY BROTHER.
I LOOK FORWARD TO INTRODUCING MY WIFE AND CONCUBINES TO YOU, ISHTAR.
I'VE INVITED ONLY A SMALL GROUP. .
...TO TONIGHT'S BANQUET, SO YOU CAN RELAX.
THE PLEASURE WILL BE MINE, PRINCE TELIPINU.

I BELIEVE THE EGYPTIANS WILL RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRY TO REORGANIZE THEIR ARMY.
NO, MY BROTHER.
YOUR MAJESTY, WILL YOU ENGAGE THE EGYPTIANS IN THE NEAR FUTURE?
I LOVE HIM, BUT TO MAKE LOVE WITH HIM...?
I DUNNO...
HADI'S COMMENT MADE ME NERVOUS.
HIS TOUCH MAKES ME NERVOUS, TOO
WE ALMOST MADE LOVE A COUPLE TIMES BEFORE, BUT...
THROB THROB THROB
THROB THROB THROB
BA-BUMP!
...TO RETURN TO HATTUSA AT ONCE.
THEREFORE, I PLAN.
...IT WON'T BE UNTIL WE RETURN TO HATTUSA

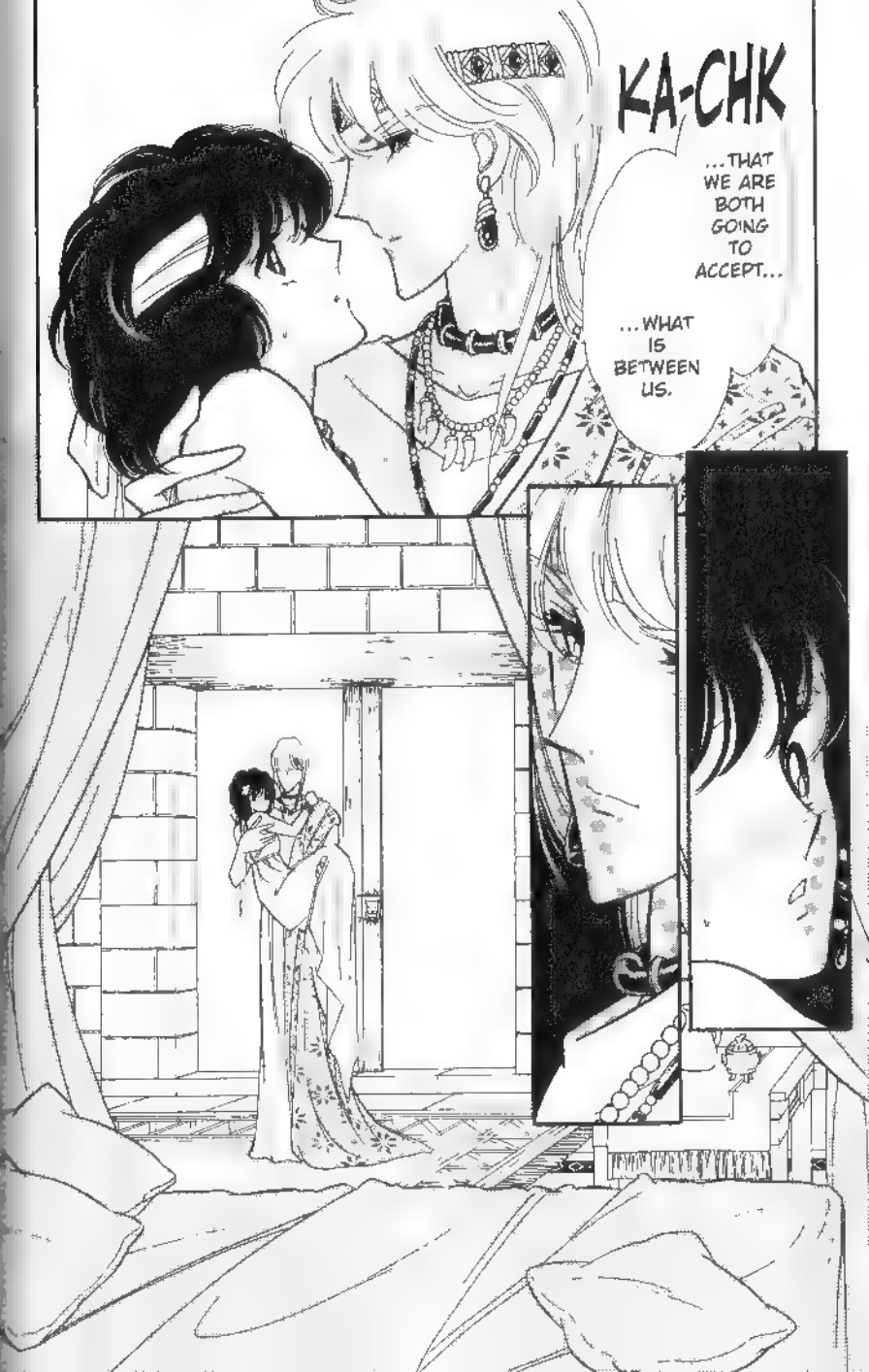
HAVE YOU DECIDED WHOM TO MARRY, YOUR MAJESTY?
TELIPINU'S WIFE
MY DEAR SISTER..
WHOM TO MARRY?
YOU KEEP DISCUSSING WAR WITH HIS MAJESTY.
HOW DO YOU EXPECT HIS MAJESTY TO RELAX?
OH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
MY APOLOGIES, YOUR MAJESTY.
YOU MUST HAVE SOME IDEA.
WE HEAR YOU'VE RECEIVED MARRIAGE OFFERS FROM ALL OVER.
SO WHO WILL BE THE LUCKY PRINCESS?
CONGRATULATIONS

YOUR PERSONAL LIFE IS NONE OF MY AFFAIR...
I APPRECI-ATE...
...BUT TO REMAIN UNMARRIED MAY WORK TO QUEEN DOWAGER NAKIA'S ADVANTAGE.
I WOULD ADVISE YOU TO MARRY A PRINCESS FROM A STRONG NATION...
...SO YOU MAY BENEFIT FROM THE ALLIANCE THAT SUCH A MARRIAGE WILL PRODUCE.
...YOUR ADVICE, MY BROTHER.
I'D FORGOTTEN ABOUT THAT.
HE'LL HAVE TO TAKE A LAWFUL WIFE SOON.

?!
...RATHER TIRED, SO FORGIVE ME IF I RETIRE AT THIS TIME. THE REST OF YOU, PLEASE CONTINUE TO ENJOY YOURSELVES
MY BROTHER...
...MY DEEPEST THANKS FOR THE WONDERFUL BANQUET, BUT I AM...
WHAT?!

REST WELL. WE'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW.
PLEASE FORGIVE MY CRASS INSENSI-TIVITY.
AH YES, YOU TWO HAVE BEEN APART FOR A WHILE.
W... WAIT A MINUTE, YOUR MAJESTY.
ARE WE... I MEAN, WE AREN'T...?
THANK YOU, MY BROTHER.
WE'RE STILL ON A MILITARY EXPEDITION.
YOU'RE STILL LEADING YOUR TROOPS. YOU HAVE RESPONSIBILI-TIES!

WHY ARE YOU MAK NG A FUSS?
EVERYONE KNOWS I ACCOMPANY YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.
NO ONE WILL BE SURPRISED TO SEE US TOGETHER TONIGHT.
B... BUT...
...YOU'RE STILL BADLY NJURED!
SQUEAK
I TOLD YOU..


KA-CHK
...THAT WE ARE BOTH GOING TO ACCEPT...
...WHAT IS BETWEEN US.

HUG

BUT..
I.M..
...I HAVE ONE REQUEST TO MAKE
I WANT YOU TO RETURN THE LETTER I SENT YOU FROM ARZAWA.
I WANT TO DESTROY IT, BECAUSE I SAID THINGS THAT NO LONGER MEAN QUITE...
CLINK
CLANK
CLINK

IT WASN'T I WHO BROKE IT.
AH!

THR OB
THR OB
THR OB
THR OB
DON'T THINK THAT I DON'T KNOW...
...HOW MUCH YOU SACRIFICED FOR ME.

...!!
YOUR PARENTS YOUR SIS-TERS...
...EVEN YOUR OWN COUNTRY...
...YOU GAVE THEM ALL UP TO STAY WITH ME.
I WILL DO EVERY-THING IN MY POWER TO ..
...MAKE UP FOR THESE LOSSES.
YOUR MAJESTY!

CALL ME BY MY GIVEN NAME WHEN WE'RE ALONE.
I NEED TO HEAR IT... FROM SOMEONE FROM YOU!
YOU MEAN. . .KAIL?
THAT'S RIGHT.

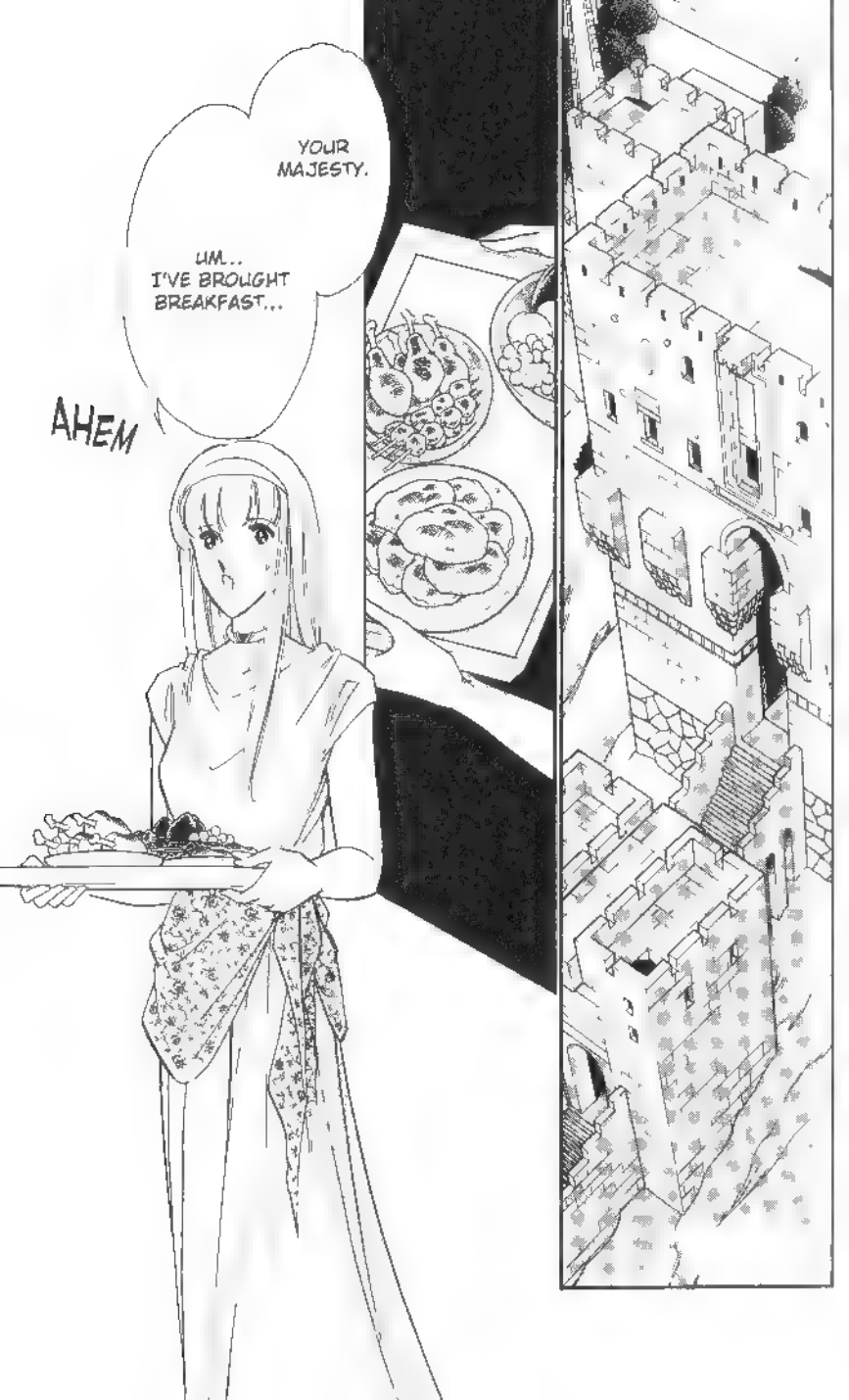
KAIL!

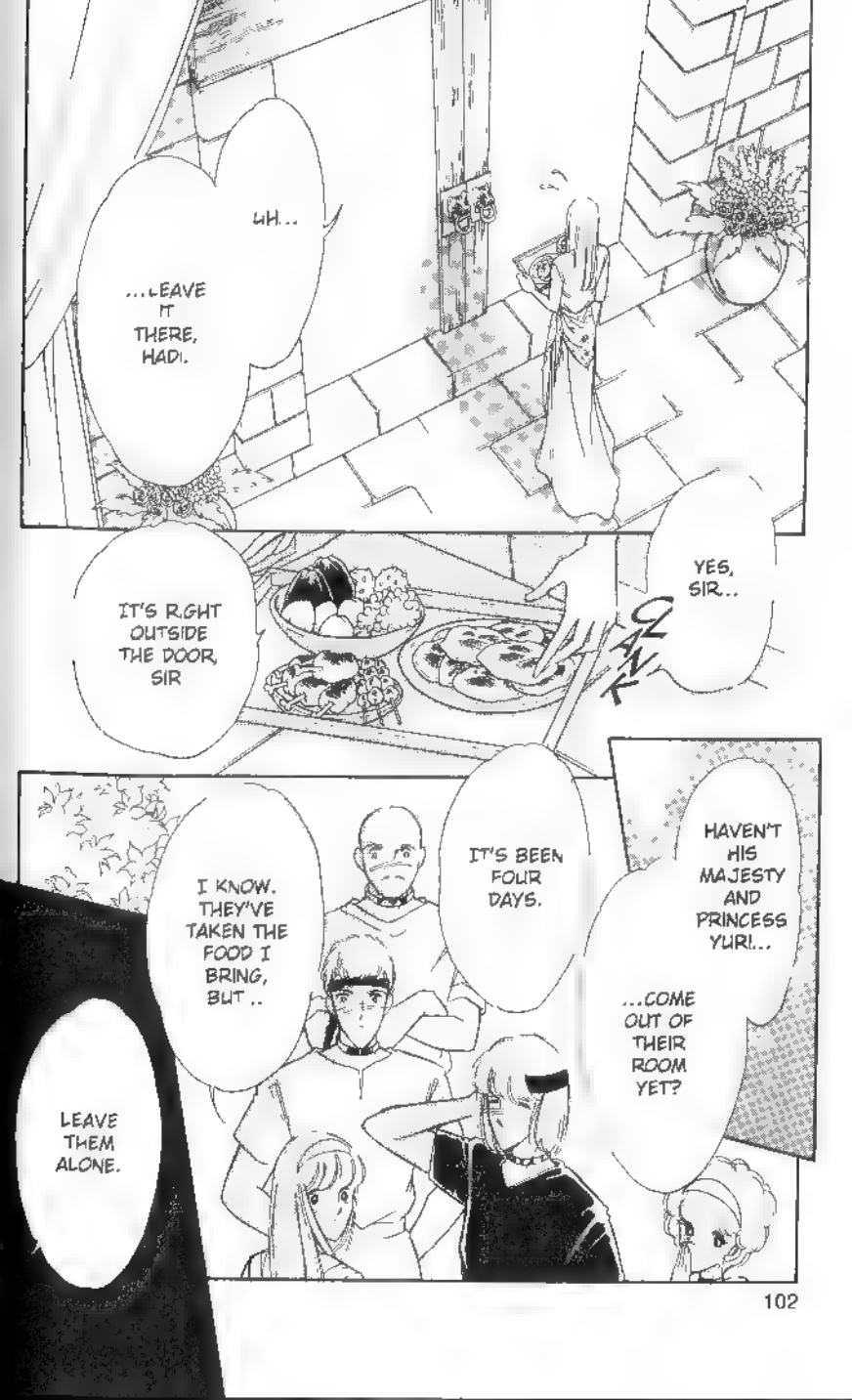
AH!
N...
...NO!
STOP...
KAIL!

YUR!...
...I LOVE YOU.
I LOVE YOU.
I REALLY LOVE YOU.
CLANG

THE WIND IS
BLOWING...

...AND THEN BE BURIED BESIDE THIS MAN IN THIS NATION'S RED SOIL.
I'VE DECIDED TO LIVE BENEATH THIS VAST SKY...


AHEM
UM... I'VE BROUGHT BREAKFAST...
YOUR MAJESTY.


UH...
...LEAVE IT THERE, HADI.
IT'S RIGHT OUTSIDE THE DOOR, SIR
YES, SIR..
CLANK
HAVEN'T HIS MAJESTY AND PRINCESS YURI...
IT'S BEEN FOUR DAYS.
I KNOW. THEY'VE TAKEN THE FOOD I BRING, BUT ..
...COME OUT OF THEIR ROOM YET?
LEAVE THEM ALONE.

WHEN HE GETS BORED, HE'LL COME OUT.
FORTUNATELY, THERE ARE NO URGENT MATTERS HIS MAJESTY NEEDS TO ATTEND TO.
YES, SIR..
BORED OF WHAT?

UNH..
..WAS SOMEONE AT THE DOOR JUST NOW?

CLING
IS IT MORN-ING?
IS IT NIGHT? I DON'T...
KAIL?
YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT.
AH...!

YOU'VE BECOME A MUCH BETTER...
HEH
...KISSER. OUR FIRST ONE WAS TERRIBLE.
THAT WAS WHEN...
...I STILL HATED YOU, Y'KNOW!
DUMMY!
!!
HOW ABOUT NOW?

I DECIDED TO STAY HERE SOLELY BECAUSE OF YOU
YOU ARE EVERYTHING TO ME NOW
I CAN'T EXPRESS MY FEELINGS TO YOU WITH WORDS
HOW ABOUT NOW?

I'M SO HAPPY
THAT I FEEL ALMOST NUMB.

I'M FINE AS LONG AS I'M IN HIS ARMS.
I NEVER EXPECTED TO FALL IN LOVE WITH H.M.
BACK THEN, WHEN HE HELD ME...
HE SCARED ME AND MADE ME ANGRY.

?!
WHAT'S WRONG, YURI?
I THOUGHT I COULD CONTROL MYSELF...
...THAT I COULD CONTROL MY FEELINGS FOR YOU, BUT NOW I'VE TASTED THIS...
YURI?

KAL.
...I HAVE ONE FAVOR TO ASK YOU!
REALLY? WHAT IS IT?
I'LL GIVE YOU ANY-THING YOU WANT.
YOU'LL HAVE TO TAKE A LAWFUL WIFE SOON, RIGHT?
I KNOW YOU MUST, NOW THAT YOU'VE BECOME KING.

BUT I WANT YOU TO PROMISE ME...
...THAT I'LL BE YOUR ONLY CONCUBINE!
I BEG YOU...

KAIL?!
THUD

OH, YOUR MAJESTY.
LONG TIME NO SEE, SIR.

...TAKE YURI AS MY LAWFUL WIFE
I'M GOING TO...
...TO DISCUSS, IWAN!
I HAVE BUSI-NESS...
HMPH!

BY TRADITION OUR KING MARRIES A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL FAMILY, OR A PRINCESS FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY
I AM CERTAIN THAT THE QUEEN DOWAGER, THE SENATE AND ALL THE ARISTOCRATS WILL OPPOSE YOUR WISH.
ARE YOU AWARE HOW DIFFICULT...
...THAT WILL BE, YOUR MAJESTY?
OH, YOUR MAJESTY!
THAT'S WONDERFUL!
GREAT NEWS!

I'D BEGUN TO THINK IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND A WOMAN I WOULD WANT TO TAKE FOR A WIFE.
IT WOULD BE A MIRACLE IF YOU WERE ABLE TO CONVINCE THEM TO AGREE TO THIS.
SO A MIRACLE HAS ALREADY HAPPENED.
THEN YURI CAME TO OUR LAND, AND I BEGAN TO THINK...
...FOOLISH THINGS, KNOWING SHE WOULD SOON LEAVE. BUT SHE'S DECIDED TO STAY.

I WANT YOU TO UNDER-STAND...
...THIS MAR-RIAGE WILL BE FOR THE GOOD OF THE EMPIRE.

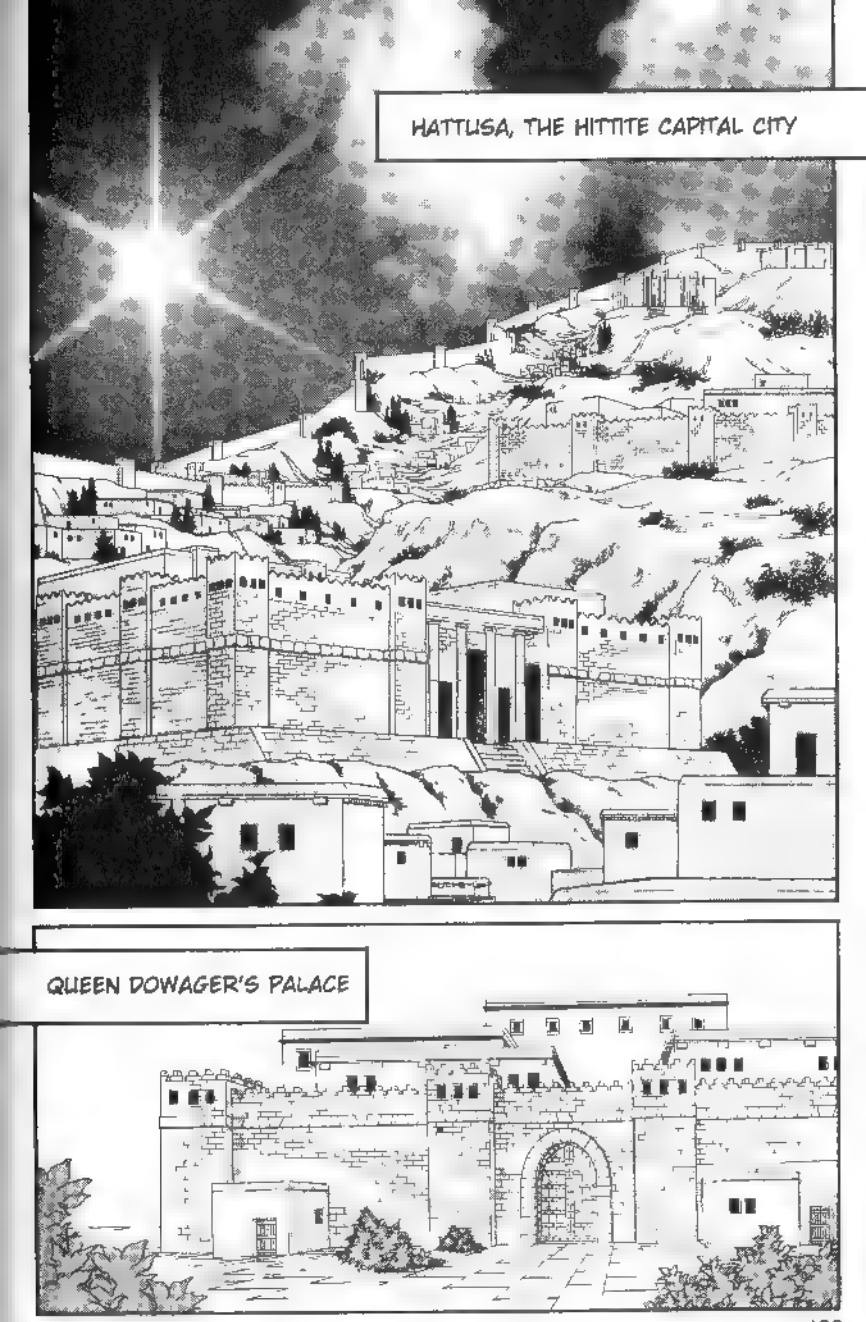
...AND MAKE HER THIS EMPIRE'S TAWANANNA!
I'M DETER-MINED TO MARRY YURI...
YES, YOUR MAJESTY!

WE NEED TO PREPARE HER MORNING BATH AS WELL
LET'S GET PRINCESS YURI'S DRESS READY
YES, SISTER! AT ONCE!
I KNOW, BUT I CAN'T HELP GETTING EXCITED!
HOW WONDER-FUL!
PRINCESS YURI, OUR TAWANANNA!
BUT THERE ARE COUNTLESS OBSTACLES SHE MUST OVERCOME.
RUSTLE

PRINCESS YUR...

GASP
IS THAT YOU, RUSAFA ?
!!
ARE YOU ...
RUSAFA?
...
ISN'T THAT Pprincess YURI'S SHAWL?
FWIP

I EXPECT NOTHING!
I KNOW THAT!
HEY!
PRINCESS YURI IS HIS MAJESTY'S CONCUBINE!
JUST TO BE ALLOWED TO...
...LOVE HER IN SECRET, AND KEEP IT SO.


HATTUSA, THE HITTITE CAPITAL CITY
QUEEN DOWAGER'S PALACE

URH.
YOU MUST COMPLETE THE PREPARATORY WORK ..
...BEFORE KA'L RETURNS.
SPLASH
YES, YOUR EXCELLENCY.
AND I HAVE FINISHED. .
.. ALL THAT NEEDED TO BE DONE.

I HAVE ASSEMBLED OVER ONE HUNDRED LADIES...
...WHO ARE PREPARED TO TAKE UP PLACES IN HIS MAJESTY'S SERAGLIO
THERE ARE ALSO SEVEN PROSPECTIVE BRIDES, INCLUDING PRINCESSES FROM NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES.

VERY WELL.
THEY ARE MOST ANXIOUS TO MEET H.M.
AS OUR KING, KAL MUST TAKE 10 TO 20 CONCUBINES AT LEAST.
SPLASH
ONCE HE DOES SO, HIS ATTENTION WON'T BE ON YURI NEARLY AS OFTEN.

...THAT I BROUGHT THAT GIRL INTO THIS TIME AND PLACE.
KAI. MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN...
THEREFORE, HE MUST RETURN HER TO ME.
ENJOY THE DAYS THAT REMAIN TO YOU, YURI. HEH HEH...

ONCE YOU RETURN TO HATTUSA, YOU WILL NOT HAVE A MOMENT'S PEACE.
I'M SO HAPPY WHEN I'M IN KAIL'S ARMS
WHEN HE HOLDS ME, ALL MY WORRIES DISAPPEAR.

WE MADE IT!
WE'RE FINALLY HOME AGAIN!
HOW EXCITED YOU ARE.
YOU'VE LIVED HERE FOR TWO YEARS, YET IT STILL SEEMS EXOTIC TO YOU?
HATTUSA

I NEVER EXPECTED TO RETURN TO HATTUSA TO SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE HERE.
WELL, I THOUGHT I WAS...
...GOING BACK TO JAPAN, NOT TO UGARIT.
THE KING'S CONCUBINE...
...I HAD NO IDEA THAT'S WHAT I WOULD ONE DAY BECOME.
YOU CAME BACK HERE TO BE WITH ME.
AND YOU WILL STAY WITH ME UNTIL THE DAY I DIE. DON'T FORGET THAT.
SQUEEZE

CONGRATULATIONS, ISHTAR, ON YOUR VICTORY AGAINST ARZAWA.
WELCOME HOME, YOUR MAJESTY.
WHAT AN INSPIRING DEMONSTRATION OF YOUR MAGNANIMITY.
YOUR MAJESTY
I HEARD YOU ISSUED A PARDON FOR PRISONERS.
THEY'RE SO WRONG...
HIS MAJESTY MUST BE...
...VERY HAPPY ABOUT THE VICTORY TO MAKE SUCH A GESTURE.

THEY'RE SO LOVEY-DOVEY RIGHT NOW RIDING WITH THEM WAS NO FUN.
BABY FRED NOME FOR ME.
...BUT THAT PRINCESS YURI HAS FINALLY BECOME HIS TRUE CONCUBINE.
YEP.
THEY MISTAKENLY BELIEVE PRINCESS YURI WAS ALREADY HIS MAJESTY'S CONCUBINE
...IT SN'T VICTORY THAT'S SO PLEASED HIS MAJESTY...
YOUR MAJESTY.
HER EXCELLENCY THE QUEEN DOWAGER AND THE SENATE HAVE PREPARED A GFT TO CELEBRATE YOUR VICTORIOUS RETURN.
A GIFT? FOR ME?
YES, SIR.
PLEASE PROCEED TO YOUR SERAGLIO.

NAKIA'S PREPARED A GIFT FOR KAL?
MY SERAGLIO? WHY?
THIS CAN'T BE GOOD...

SHRUSH
WELCOME HOME...
...YOUR MAJESTY!
!!
?!
WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

WE HAVE TAKEN THE LIBERTY, YOUR MAJESTY...
...OF ASSEMBLING THESE WOMEN FOR YOU.
THE EMPIRE'S PRESTIGE WOULD SUFFER F NEIGHBOR NG COUNTRIES
YOU WILL CHOOSE A WIFE, AND THEN YOU MAY TAKE AS MANY CONCUBINES AS YOU WISH.
...WERE TO LEARN THAT YOU KEPT ONLY ONE CONCUB NE.
ALL THESE WOMEN ARE HERE ONLY FOR KAL?!
AS MANY AS I WISH?!

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE THE PRINCESSES WHO WILL COMPETE TO BECOME YOUR WIFE.
THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING OF BABYLONIA...
..PRINCESS ISHIN SAURA.
PRINCESS SAURA IS, I WOULD ADD, THE QUEEN DOWAGER'S NIECE.
THE DAUGHTER OF THE QUEEN OF ARZAWA...
...PRINCESS ALEXANDRA.
HI ISHTAR!
PRINCESS ALEXANDRA?!
THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING OF ASSYRIA...
...PRINCESS ADDA SHARLATO.

THE NIECES OF EARLIER HITTITE RULERS.
..PRINCESSES URE, AKSHAM.
THE DAUGHTER OF OUR LATE KING
PRINCESS SABAHA
BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
YOUR MAJESTY.
...AND SELTO.
SELTO?!
KAIL KNOWS HER?
?!

...BUT THE MATTER OF MY SERAGLIO CAN WAIT.
...THESE EFFORTS ON MY BEHALF...
I SEE. I APPRECIATE...
I WILL INTRODUCE THE PROSPECTIVE CONCUBINES LATER.
HOWEVER, IF THERE ARE ANY YOU FANCY NOW, THEY ARE YOURS TO SUMMON.
ONCE THEY SPEND THE NIGHT WITH YOU, THEY'LL BE ACKNOWLEDGED AS YOUR CONCUBINES.
TREAT THESE WOMEN WITH PROPER HOSPITALITY.
CONVENING THE SENATE IS MY FIRST PRIORITY.
YOUR MAJESTY!
OHOHOHOHOH

I KNEW THIS MIGHT HAPPEN.
...BUT TO HAVE IT PLAY OUT RIGHT IN FRONT OF MY EYES?
AM I REALLY READY FOR THIS?
YOUR MAJESTY...
...IT'S CLEAR HER INTENTION IS TO PHYSICALLY SEPARATE YOU AND PRINCESS YUR.
I UNWISELY CONSIDERED THE ISSUE INSIGNIFICANT...
NAKIA TOOK ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT I LEFT MY SERAGLIO EMPTY.

IT IS AN UNACCEPTABLE PROSPECT, BUT WE CAN'T SEND THOSE PRINCESSES HOME RIGHT AWAY.
I CAN'T A..OW THAT TO HAPPEN!
BAM
.. BECAUSE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES IT WOULD AFFORD TO INFLUENCE AFFA RS OF STATE
IT'S EQUALLY CLEAR SHE WOULD LIKE HER NIECE TO BECOME YOUR WIFE...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, YURI. I—
YOUR MAJESTY ...
OH, LORD.
..WHAT A NUISANCE!
YOUR MAJESTY.

I AM DEEPLY HONORED TO BE INVITED..
...AS A CANDIDATE TO BECOME YOUR QUEEN.
SELTO!
I WOULD REMIND YOU THAT YOUR LAST VISIT TO ME WAS OVER TWO YEARS AGO.
IT'S BEEN... VERY LONELY FOR ME SINCE THEN.

SHE'S...
DO I NO LONGER HAVE YOUR AFFECTION?
...KAIL'S FORMER LOVER?
GLANCE
I KNOW I'M NOT THE ONLY PRINCESS HERE ON WHOM YOU HAVE BESTOWED YOUR FAVORS...
..BUT PLEASE DON'T FORGET ME.

BUMP
WE MAY BE SHARING THE SERAGLIO SOON.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
ISHTAR.
KAIL HAS... COURTED SOME OF THE PRINCESSES VYING TO BECOME HIS WIFE?
YOU ALONE HAVE MY LOVE, YURI.
YOUR MAJESTY.

I AM ENTITLED TO SUMMON ANY WOMAN I LIKE TO MY BEDROOM.
YOU, HOW-EVER,
...ARE THE ONLY ONE I EVER SHALL SUMMON.

...KAL'S ARMS ARE AROUND ME. PERHAPS..
WHEN I WAKE UP ..
...THIS IS HOW HE IS WITH ALL THE WOMEN WHO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH HIM.

I KNOW HE LOVES ME, BUT...
!!
UNH...
I'M JEALOUS! I MUSTN'T BE, BUT I AM!
I CAN'T STOP THINKING OF THE MANY OTHER WOMEN HE'S KNOWN

SIGH...
GOOD MORNING, PRINCESS YURI.
STILL TIRED FROM YOUR ADVEN-TURES?
UM . WELL...
GASP
ISHTAR!

GLOOM
PRINCESS ALEXANDRA!
I'M NOT MARRYING ANY MAN!
...SOMEHOW I'M NOW A PROSPECTIVE BRIDE!
I ASKED MY MOTHER'S PERMISSION TO VISIT YOU, BUT...
I'VE BEEN DYING TO SEE YOU!
PLEASE DON'T THINK I CAME HERE HOPING TO MARRY HIS MAJESTY!
I'M FINE, I JUST HAVEN'T... SLEPT MUCH LATELY.
AREN'T YOU FEELING WELL?
THIS WORRIES ME..
YOU LOOK PALE, ISHTAR.
OH!
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I LOVE.
UNDERSTANDABLE. YOU'VE BEEN CALLED TO HIS MAJESTY'S BEDCHAMBER EVERY NIGHT.

I FIND IT UNDIGNIFIED THAT THE HITTITE SERAGLIO ALLOWS A COMMONER TO WALK AROUND AS IF SHE OWNED THE PLACE
EXACTLY!
IF YOU'RE NOT FEELING WELL...
...WHY NOT STAY IN YOUR OWN ROOM?
CHUCKLE CHUCKLE
THAT'S NOT THE SAME AS BEING OF NOBLE BIRTH
YES, SHE'S RIGHT
SHE'S RIGHT!
QUIET!
ISHTAR IS HIS MAJESTY'S CONCUBINE!
EXCUSE US
WOULD YOU PLEASE EAT SOMEWHERE ELSE?
ANYWAY, IT'S A NICE DAY, PRINCESS YURI.
HOW ABOUT HAVING BREAKFAST IN THE COURTYARD?
...

EXCUSE ME! PRINCESS YURI IS DINING HERE!
YOU'LL HAVE TO GO SOMEWHERE ELSE.
PRINCESS ISHIN SAURA IS HAVING HER BREAKFAST THERE
WE HAVE EVERY RIGHT. YOUR "PRINCESS" IS A COMMONER.
HOW DARE YOU!
PRINCESS YURI IS HIS MAJESTY'S CONCUBINE! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT...
YOU WILL MAKE WAY FOR OUR PRINCESS.
THAT IS OF NO IMPORTANCE.

HER POSITION AS A CONCUB NE WILL LAST .
. .ONLY AS LONG AS H'S MAJESTY'S INTEREST N HER.
YOUR MiSTRESS HAS NO SUCH RANK
OUR PRINCESS, HOWEVER, IS FROM A NOBLE FAMILY WITH GREAT POWER AND INFLUENCE

I'LL EAT IN MY ROOM
ISHTAR!
PRINCESS YURI!
COME ON, ALL OF YOU.
NEVER MIND, HADI.
SIGH...
.YURI'S NOT THE SORT TO GET INVOLVED WITH THE SERAGLIO'S PETTY POWER GAMES.
IT MUST BE HARD...
...TO HAVE TO PUT UP WITH THOSE AGGRESSIVE WOMEN
NO QUESTION, SIR.

SINCE I HAVE NO INTENTION OF BEING WITH ANY WOMAN BUT YUR...
...I DIDN'T ANTICIPATE THAT THIS SITUATION WOULD ARISE. HOW NAIVE IS THAT, I-BAN!?
YOUR MAJESTY...
I KNOW.
IF SHE CAN'T HANDLE THIS, PEOPLE WILL THINK YUR UNFIT TO BECOME MY WIFE.

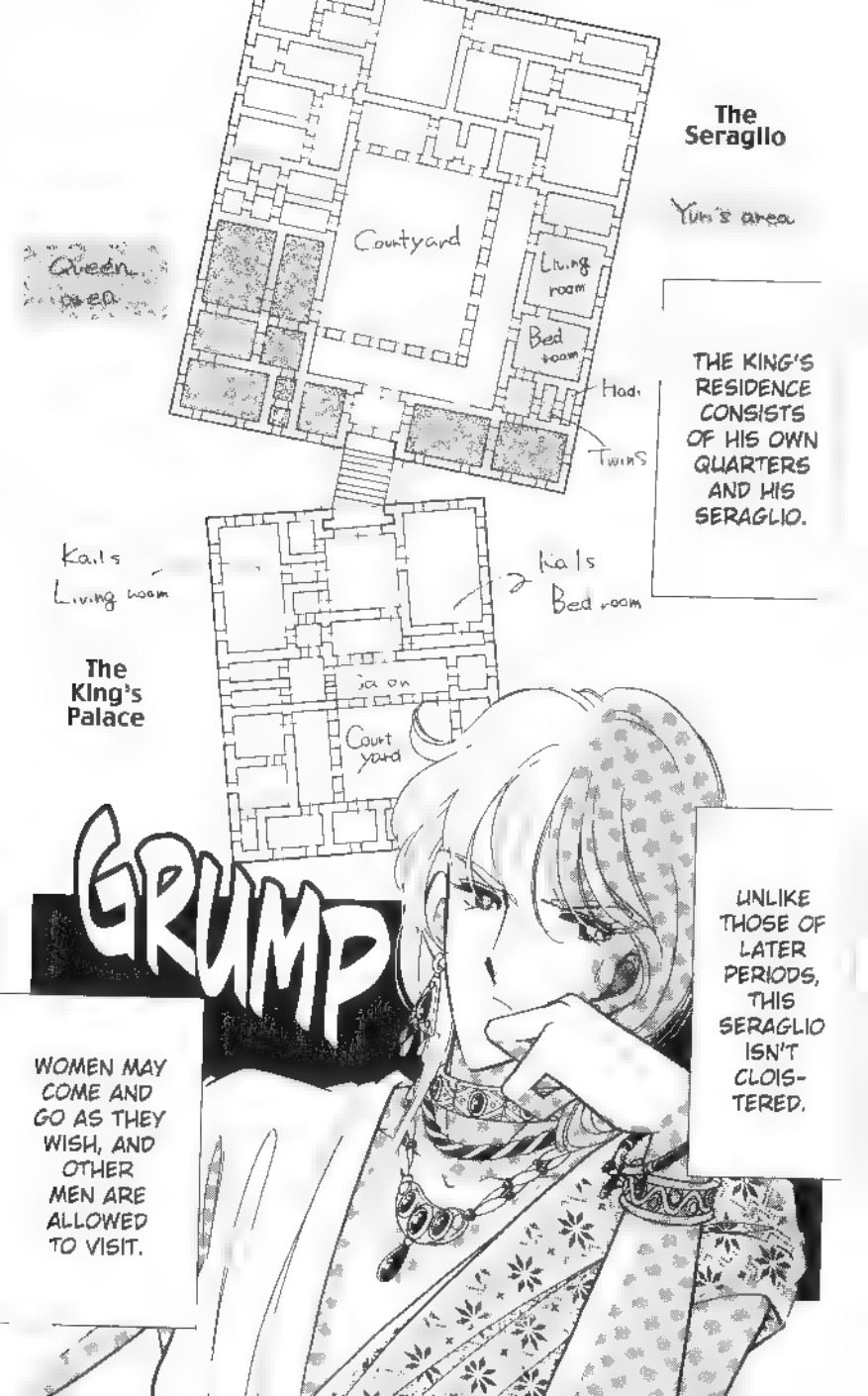
MY QUEEN WILL HOLD THE SECOND MOST POWERFUL POSITION IN THE EMPIRE
SHE WILL HAVE TO ATTEND TO POLITICAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS IN THE EVENT OF MY ABSENCE.
I WOULD SEND ALL THOSE WRETCHED WOMEN AWAY RIGHT NOW, BUT...
SHE'S ALREADY SHOWN SHE CAN, BUT THAT WILL COUNT AS NOTHING IF SHE'S OVERWHELMED IN THE SERAGLIO.

...THIS REALLY IS A PRIME TEST OF YURI'S COMPETENCE. SHE MUST GAIN CONTROL OF THE SERAGLIO, OR LOSE ALL CREDIBILITY.
SHE HAS OVERCOME SO MUCH ALREADY..
...SURELY SHE CAN DEAL WITH SUCH TRIVIAL WOMEN!

PRINCESS YURI!
YOU DON'T NEED TO HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE ANYONE IN THIS SERAGLIO!
...YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AS ISHTAR ARE WIDELY KNOWN IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES!
THAT'S RIGHT! YOU ARE HIS MAJESTY'S ONLY CONCUBINE AND...
THEIR NOBILITY PALES IN COMPARISON TO YOUR POSITION!
I WASN'T INTIMIDATED BY THEIR NOBILITY.
SPLISH
BUT THAT WOMAN HAD A POINT
THOSE PRINCESSES ARE UNDER THE GUARDIANSHIP OF POWERFUL CLANS.
OH, WE DIDN'T MEAN...

IT WOULD BE TO KAIL'S ADVANTAGE TO MARRY ONE OF THOSE PRINCESSES.
AFTER ALL, WHAT CAN HE HOPE TO GAIN BY COMMITTING TO ONE WOMAN...
A WOMAN WITH NO POWERFUL CONNECTIONS?

THERE ARE MANY BUILDINGS IN HATTUSA...
...TUCKED BEHIND THE CASTLE WALLS. EACH BUILDING HAS ITS FUNCTION.
THE KING'S RESI-DENCE IS LOCATED IN THE HEART OF THE CITY, ON A HILL OVER-LOOKING THE ENTIRE CITY.


The Seraglio
Yun's area
Queen's area
Courtyard
Living room
Bed room
Hadi
Twins
THE KING'S RESIDENCE CONSISTS OF HIS OWN QUARTERS AND HIS SERAGLIO.
Kai's Living room
Kai's Bed room
The King's Palace
Court yard
GRUMP
UNLIKE THOSE OF LATER PERIODS, THIS SERAGLIO ISN'T CLOISTERED.
WOMEN MAY COME AND GO AS THEY WISH, AND OTHER MEN ARE ALLOWED TO VISIT.

BUZZ
BUZZ
KING MURSILI II'S LIVING ROOM
CACKLE
I'D LOVE TO READ MY POEMS TO YOU IN YOUR BED-CHAMBER.
I WRITE POETRY, YOUR MAJES-TY.
CACKLE
COME TO MY ROOM AND I WI... PLAY FOR YOU.
YOUR MAJESTY.
I PLAY THE LYRE.
CACKLE
THESE WOMEN ARE TRYING SO HARD TO GET KAIL'S ATTEN-TION.
AND NOT JUST BECAUSE HE'S KING HE'S INCREDIBLY ATTRACTIVE IN HIS OWN RIGHT!
IF ONLY MY PREDE-CESSORS HAD BANNED WOMEN OF THE SERAGLIO FROM THE KING'S RESIDENCE.

EXCUSE ME, LADIES.
I HAVE BUSINESS IN THE AUDIENCE CHAMBER.
OH, YOUR MAJ-ESTY!
WILL YOU BE COMING TO THE BANQUET TONIGHT?
I MEAN THE ONE THE SENATE IS HOST-ING?
BANQUET? OH.. YES, I SHALL...
YOU NEEDN'T COME TO MY CHAMBER TONIGHT
YOUR MAJESTY?
YURI.

..COME TO YOUR ROOM.
I WILL...

I HEAR THAT AT TONIGHT'S BANQUET HIS MAJESTY WILL BE ASKED TO CHOOSE A WIFE.
WHAT A WASTE OF TIME THAT WILL BE!
WILL I HAVE TO ATTEND THAT BANQUET?
RIGHT. HIS MAJESTY'S MIND IS MADE UP.
OF COURSE YOU WILL!
WHY WOULD YOU THINK OTHERWISE?!
SLIP
TH
ACK!
UD

OIL?
LOOK! THE CARPET'S DRENCHED WITH OIL!
PRIN-CESS YUR!
OH! ARE YOU OKAY?
YES, YES, I'M FINE
HOW UNSIGHTLY THAT IS!
WELL, ISHTAR MAY BE GOOD IN BATTLE...
...BUT SHE'S AWFULLY CLUMSY IN THE SERAGLIO.
PRINCESS SELTO!

HADI!
EXCUSE ME, PRINCESS SELTO.
IT'S INTERESTING THAT YOU WERE RIGHT HERE TO SEE THIS.
REMEMBER THAT WE ALL FAR OUTRANK YOUR MISTRESS!
OH MY, ARE YOU SUGGESTING *WE* DID IT?
HOW RUDE!
EVEN IF SHE'S HIS MAJESTY'S CONCUBINE, ISHTAR HAS THE LOWEST STATUS OF ANYONE IN THIS SERAGLIO.
WHAT?
EVEN MY MAIDS ARE ARISTOCRATS.

I'M GOING TO REPORT THIS TO HIS MAJESTY!
STUCK UP SNOBS! I'M SURE THEY DID THIS!
THEY'RE JEALOUS OF PRINCESS YURI!
IF HIS MAJESTY GIVES THEM A SCOLDING, THEY'LL STOP...
I'M AS JEALOUS OF PRINCESS SELTO AS SHE IS OF ME.
MY BLOOD BOILS JUST THINKING THAT KAIL USED TO LOVE HER.
HIS MAJESTY IS VERY BUSY.
DON'T DISTURB HIM OVER SUCH A TRIVIAL MATTER.
WAIT, RYU AND SHALA!
T-TRIVIAL?

THEY BRING WITH THEM POWER AND INFLUENCE HE WILL NEED IN THE YEARS AHEAD.
WHAT REALLY HURTS IS THAT THOSE PRINCESSES CAN PROVIDE KAIL WITH SUPPORT I CAN'T OFFER.
ALL I BRING IS...ME!

YOUR MAJESTY!
YOUR MAJESTY, PLEASE WAIT!
YOUR MAJESTY, ARE YOU AWARE THAT THE WOMEN OF THE SERAGLIO ARE BULLYING PRINCESS YURI?
UNHAND ME, KASH! I'M HERE TO...
HOLD IT, RUSAFA!
WHAT'S THE FUSS? HIS MAJESTY IS BUSY WITH STATE AFFAIRS.

PRINCESS YURI IS SUFFERING FROM THEIR INSULTS!
THEY CAN'T BE ALLOWED TO DO THIS!
RUSAFA!
YOU OVER-STEP YOUR BOUNDS!
I'M SURE IF I TELL THOSE WOMEN TO SHOW RESPECT FOR YURI...
...AND THAT THERE IS NO FORGIVENESS FOR ANYONE WHO DEFIES HER, THEY'LL STOP THEIR HARASSMENT AT ONCE.
IF YOU KNOW THAT, YOUR MAJESTY, WHY...?
WHY DON'T I DO SO?

IN ORDER FOR HER TO BECOME TAWANANNA, SHE MUST SHOW SHE CAN HANDLE SUCH MATTERS HERSELF.
...YUR WILL NEVER BECOME MY QUEEN.
BECAUSE IF I NTERFERE..
...SHE WILL LOSE ALL STANDING BEFORE THE SENATE, THE ARISTO-CRATS, AND THE PEOPLE.
IF I PROTECT HER FROM THEM...

PRINCESS YURI HAS NO INTEREST IN POWER OR STATUS.
..THAT'S WHY EVERYONE IN THE EMPIRE ADORES HER!
THAT'S WHY I'M... I MEAN...
B...BUT YOUR MAJESTY, WILL PRINCESS YURI BE. .
...UP TO COMPETING WITH THOSE WOMEN FOR DOMINANCE IN THE SERAGLIO?

PRIN-CESS AKSHAM ...
...YOU HAVE NO WORRIES THERE
HEH... I SUP-POSE.
IN ORDER TO CAPTURE HIS MAJESTY'S ATTENTION AT TONIGHT'S BANQUET...
...I MUST BE MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN ANYONE ELSE IN ATTEN-DANCE
BUT ISHTAR IS A SPECIAL PROB-LEM
SHE CAN BE QUITE FETCHING IN HER WAY.
IF ONLY SHE CAME UP SHORT IN SOME WAY...
...TONIGHT, IN FRONT OF HIS MAJESTY.

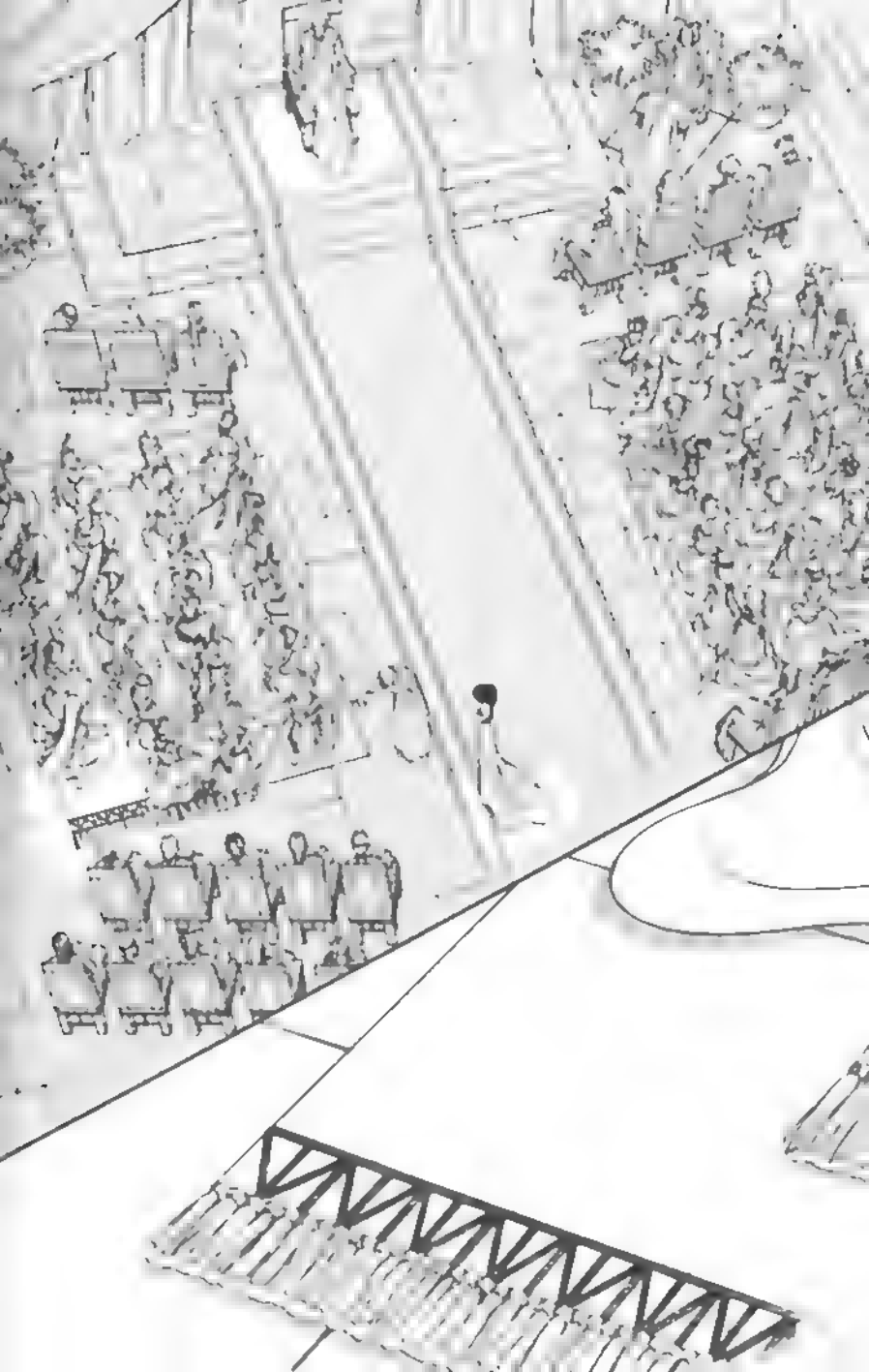
LEAVE IT TO US
.. WE MAY HAVE AN IDEA ABOUT THAT.
I BELIEVE...
CHUCKLE CHUCKLE
...I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THIS. IF I DID, I COULD NOT POSSIBLY CONDONE IT.
CHUCKLE
VERY WELL, LADIES. JUST REMEMBER..
CHUCKLE

OH!
SHE'S HERE!
WE... NOW

HAVE I DONE SOME-THING?
AH... THOSE STARES
NO! YOU'RE FINE!
DON'T BE NERVOUS!
HOW PRETTY ISHTAR IS!
OH, ISHTAR.
HIS MAJESTY SHOULD HAVE HER DRESS UP MORE OFTEN.

MOTHERS CAN'T JOIN A SERAGLIO.
I'M JUST HERE WITH MY FATHER.
ME? HEAVENS NO! BUT THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT.
ARE... ARE YOU ONE OF THE CANDIDATES?
NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
PRINCESS GUZEL!
BUMP
OH, EXCUSE ME
YOU'RE SO TINY, I DIDN'T SEE YOU THERE.

WELL, I...
IT MUST BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU IN THE SERAGLIO.
PRINCESS GUZEL, DAUGHTER OF THE SENATE'S CHAIRMAN, AYGIL, AND...
...YURI ISHTAR, CONCUBINE OF HIS MAJESTY.
PRINCESS GUZEL IS SEATED NEXT TO HER FATHER.
AND... AND... YOUR SEAT IS OVER THERE, ISHTAR.
YOUR RESERVED PLACES AWAIT. PLEASE BE SEATED.



THE VERY LAST SEAT, FARTHEST FROM...
...HIS MAJESTY.
GIGGLE GIGGLE GIGGLE
THIS IS INTOLER-ABLE!

IT'S IMPORTANT TO RESPECT HIERARCHY.
I WONDER WHICH PRINCESS WILL...
..GAIN HIS MAJESTY'S ATTENTION TONIGHT?
CACKLE
PRINCESS YUR...
DON'T WORRY, HADI.
I'M GETTING USED TO IT.
...
WELL.
WE NEED SOME ENTERTAINMENT, DON'T WE?
SPEAKING OF WHICH...
...I HEAR THAT N ARZAWA ISHTAR DISGUISED HERSELF AS A PROFESSIONAL DANCER.

HEH
HEH
HEH
HOW YOU DISTRACTED ARZAWAN MEN WITH YOUR TINY WAIST?
WILL YOU SHOW US THE KEY TO YOUR VICTORY, ISHTAR?
A DANCER?
I'VE NEVER SEEN THE VULGAR ENTERTAINMENTS OF COMMONERS.
GIGGLE
GIGGLE
GIGGLE
IT COULD BE AN INTERESTING DIVERSION, EH?
PRINCESS YURI!
IF IT WILL AMUSE YOU.
FWIP

YURI...
ILBANI, PLAY FOR ME.
YES, MA'AM.
HEH
HEH
HEH
HEH

FLAP
SHE'S CAPTIVATING.
OH!
...STILL VERY BOYISH, BUT SHE'S ALSO VERY...
WELL, SHE'S...
DO YOU THINK ISHTAR HAS CHANGED?

HOW CAN I DESCRIBE IT?
...BEGINNING TO BLOOM IN THE SUMMER SUNSHINE.
SHE'S LIKE A TIGHTLY CLOSED FLOWER BUD...

SNAP
...BEEN DILIGENT N YOUR DUTIES?
LADIES, HAVE YOU.
PLEASE, PRINCESS AKSHAM, BE PATIENT...

TWANG

YURI!
GLARE GLARE
GLARE
WHAT HAPPENED TO HER DRESS?
EEK ?!

RED RIVER™

14 story and art by **Chie Shinohara**